GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:271
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2001
REVIEW AND REVISION OF EDUCATION POLICY
RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Ministers and Education Ministers of several States had demanded the Government to review and revise the Education Policy and to leave education free from Saffronisation;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. RITA VERMA)

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): A copy of the resolution adopted in the meeting is annexed.

(c): The Government has not revised the National Policyon Education, 1986 as updated in 1992. The National Council of Educational Research and Training has, however brought out a National Curriculum Framework for School Educationafter wide- ranging consultations including discussion in the General Body Meeting of the Council where all States are represented through their respective Ministers of Education. The document does not contain any recommendation against the secular, scientific and democratic values enshrined in the Constitution.

The University Grants Commission, as the custodian of higher education in the country, is of the view that there is a needto rejuvenate Jyotir Vigyan and has endorsed the pursuit of such course in the spirit of free inquiry into all aspects of knowledge in the holistic sense of the term.

ANNEXREFEEREDTO INREPLY TO THELOKSABHAUNSTARRED QUESTIONNO.271DUEFORREPLYON20.11.2001 ASKEDBY SHRIMATRENUKACHOWDHURY ANDSHRISUSHILKUMARSHINDE REGARDING REVIEW AND REVISION EDUCATION POLICY.

RESOLUTION

In a meeting of Chief Ministers held in New Delhi today, the recent initiatives and decisions taken by the Union Government in the field of education have been discussed in depth. All the participants have expressed their grave concern on the following disturbing developments:

1. The curricula for different stages of education from the primary to the university levels have since been formulated under the guidance of the Union Government without consulting the State Governments or convening a conference of Education Ministers of States. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) has also been totally ignored.

2. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has already finalised and published a document named `National Curriculum Framework for School Education`.Similarly, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued several circulars to different universities of the country for introducing new subjects in the under- graduate, degree and even in Ph.D. courses.

3. It is most regrettable that certain components in the above document go against the democratic and secular values enshrined in the Constitution and cherished by the people of the country. Subjects like Jyotirvigyan (Vedic astrology) and Pourohitya (Vedic Rituals) which the UGC has decided to introduce can hardly be treated as subjects of study under the faculties of Science or Arts.

4. Since Education is a subject included in the Concurrent List of the Constitution of India, it is necessary to ascertain the views of the State Governments before taking any final decisions or formulating any policies in the field of education. It is also imperative that

approval of the Parliament should be sought in case of any major policy changes.

Considering that Education is a subject not under the exclusive domain of any particular political party but is of overwhelming concern to the country as a whole, the meeting of the Chief Ministers unanimously resolves that:

1. The Education Policy of the country should be consistent with the secular, scientific and democratic values enshrined in the Preamble of our Constitution and all decisions for formulating the Education Policy should be taken on the basis of a consensus among the Union and the States.

2. All academicians and secular forces in the country be called upon to rise to the occasion and thwart the overt and covert attempts of the Union Government to undermine the value system in our Education System since these measures do not reflect the consensus of the entire nation on the nature of our nationhood.

3. In appreciation of the sentiments and views unanimously expressed by this meeting, the Union Government should immediately withhold all decisions, orders, circulars and documents issued or published so far in this regard and take steps to reconstitute CABE for the purpose of obtaining its expert advice on the fundamental issues pertaining to the educational system of the country; this should be followed by a conference of Education Ministers of States for a fruitful interaction with the State Governments and thereafter, by approaching the Parliament for the final approval.